

## **Road chat to be tested, covered**

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Miami News-Record

Residents concerned about use of chat on residential roads have been offered assurances by District 1 Commissioner John Clarke that he will not place unincapsulated chat on roadways in residential areas.

The Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality released a statement Wednesday confirming Clark's intentions.

According to Sharon Robbins of ODEQ, Clarke said he will "clean up the residential areas that have chat in front of them on the road and intends not to place chat near any occupied residence in his district again — just on the remotest of roads."

The use of unincapsulated chat on residential roadways came into question after the Quapaw Tribe submitted a formal complaint to ODEQ alleging inappropriate use of mine tailings in District 1.

According to Tabitha Worley, environmental director of the Quapaw Tribe, the complaint was made after members witnessed county crews putting loose chat on a road behind the Quapaw Casino.

Clark said Monday the chat in question was laid over a period of a day and a half and occurred shortly after he was elected to office in January. Clark also said the use of straight chat was the result of a misunderstanding and his crews were in the process of correcting the problem.

The chat used on the roads came from the north Kenoyer chat pile, according to Clarke, and was purchased from the Ottawa Reclamation Authority.

Lead levels in the Kenoyer pile were tested in July of 2000, according to a DEQ report, and tested above the agency's acceptable lead level of 499 parts-per-million.

The report indicates the pile was segmented into 11 sections and each area underwent four tests.

Test results show Kenoyer's average lead level exceeds 1,200 parts-per-million.

According to Robbins, road surface lead levels cannot be determined by the lead levels in the chat piles from which they came.

Robbins said officials are currently in the process of testing road surfaces for elevated lead levels where Kenoyer chat has been placed — noting that road surface levels will not necessarily match the lead levels in chat piles.